

Jan. 17, 2012

Good afternoon:

Two reports issued last week measure Ohio's education performance and tell us where we should continue to focus our improvement and reform efforts.

Quality Counts 2012

Education Week's Quality Counts 2012 report, released January 12, ranks Ohio's public education system 10th in the nation, up from 11th in 2011, even though the state's overall "grade" dropped from a B- in 2011 to a C+ this year. *Education Week* tracks states in six key education areas to calculate state scores and a national score. The nation as a whole received a C.

Ohio continues to get high marks for its work in Standards, Assessments and Accountability, earning a grade of "A" and ranking 4th among the states. We received lower marks for the number of eligible children who attend preschool, the percentage of eligible students enrolled in kindergarten, the number of students proficient on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the closing of some achievement gaps, the lack of a basic skills test for new teachers, incentives for teachers to take on tough assignments in targeted schools, time set aside by districts for professional development activities, and the disparity in spending between wealthy and poor districts.

Report findings related to preschool and kindergarten attendance confirm the importance of our recent receipt of a \$70 million Race to the Top Early Learning Grant. Much of the work done under that grant will ensure that preschool and kindergarten are available to traditionally underserved families.

For additional information on the Quality Counts report, click [here](#).

Race to the Top: Ohio Report, Year One

A report on Ohio's first year Race to the Top (RttT) work issued by the U.S. Department of Education last week also gives Ohio high marks and prompted positive comments from U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan.

"Ohio is in really good shape," Duncan told the *Columbus Dispatch*. "Our team is encouraged by the commitment and by the progress. There's still a long way to go, but there's been a good working relationship."

The U.S. Department of Education issued performance reports for each of the 12 RttT states, providing summaries of progress in the four assurance areas: raising academic standards, building robust data systems to improve instruction, supporting great teachers and school leaders and turning around persistently low-performing schools.

The report gave Ohio good marks for our work to build capacity for statewide education reform, raising academic standards, improving teacher quality, turning around low-performing schools, investing in innovation and leveraging resources to improve rural schools.

Click [here](#) to see ODE's news release highlighting major year-one achievements, and see the [full report](#) for more extensive details.

While the Quality Counts and RttT reports confirm that Ohio has much work ahead of it, I believe we have a well-defined roadmap and the collective will to succeed.

Thank you for all your hard work on behalf of Ohio's students. Make it a great week.

Sincerely,



Stan W. Heffner

Note: Below are news items of interest to all superintendents and principals. Please share these items as appropriate with other suggested educators who will benefit from the information.

For school superintendents and treasurers – USDOE collects civil rights data from LEAs; Register now for Common Core Conference; Ohio Teacher of the Year nominations are now being accepted;

For curriculum directors, administrators and teachers – Register Now for Health Education Workshop; Teaching in Taiwan opportunity open to elementary and middle school teachers; Physical education evaluation training workshops scheduled for January and February; Healthy School Leadership Institute grant opportunity; Save the Date for the Coordinated School Health Conference

Good news for everyone – Brunswick student wins 2011 Wendy's High School Heisman

For school superintendents and treasurers

USDOE collects civil rights data from LEAs

Every two years, the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) conducts a Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) from a large sample of districts in each state. Approximately every 10 years, USDOE conducts a Civil Rights Data Collection from all districts. Last week, USDOE sent a letter to the superintendent of each LEA that is expected to complete the Civil Rights Data Collection for school year 2011-2012. The letter contains a unique identification and password that district personnel must use to login [here](#) and begin the data input process. Selected districts will work directly with USDOE. Many districts should be familiar with the CRDC because they are in the sample every two years. The purpose of the U.S. Department of Education's Civil Rights Data Collection is to obtain data related to the nation's public school districts' and elementary and secondary schools' obligation to provide equal educational opportunity.

To fulfill this goal, the CRDC collects a variety of information, including student enrollment and educational programs and services data, that are disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender, limited English proficiency and disability. The CRDC is a longstanding and important aspect of the Department's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) overall strategy for administering and enforcing the civil rights statutes for which it is responsible. This information is also used for policymaking by other USDOE offices, other federal agencies and researchers outside of USDOE. It is essential that each LEA provide/verify their LEA profile information, including contact personnel and school identification. The superintendent must complete the requested profile update or promptly provide this information to the designated office or staff person who will be responsible for responding to the survey.

Register now for Common Core Conference

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is hosting a conference about Ohio's adoption and implementation of the Common Core Academic Standards on Wednesday, Feb. 15, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Greater Columbus Convention Center (Rooms B200-201).

Academic content standards define what students should know and be able to do, and provide guidance to teachers and schools on content and instruction. Ohio's schools will soon move from the current

standards in mathematics and English language arts to more rigorous standards developed and embraced by a consortium of states. For more information or to register, click [here](#). Space is limited; please register by February 8. With questions, please call 614-223-1580 or email OhioRSVP@edexcellence.net.

This event is presented free of charge with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Co-hosts include the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, Ohio Grantmakers Forum, and Achieve, in conjunction with KidsOhio.org, the Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools, the Ohio Business Alliance for Higher Education and the Economy, and Ohio Education Matters.

Ohio Teacher of the Year nominations are now being accepted

Superintendents and principals are encouraged to nominate a deserving teacher from their district for the 2012-2013 Ohio Teacher of the Year award. The Ohio Teacher of the Year program is designed to honor, promote and celebrate excellence in teaching and the teaching profession. Each nominee must be a PK-12 classroom teacher who is engaged in the direct teaching of students and plans to continue in an active teaching role. He or she must be an exemplary educator who has demonstrated exceptional dedication and leadership to classroom, school and community activities.

The program recently has been redesigned for Ohio with four major differences from past years:

- The timeframe for nominations and applications has been changed. Nominations open Jan. 6 and applications must be completed no later than April 27, 2012;
- The application asks for data/evidence to substantiate student learning;
- Only principals and superintendents may nominate a teacher for this prestigious honor; and,
- Only one nominee per district will be considered. If more than one nominee is recommended, the district is responsible for choosing a nominee who will represent the district.

To review this program and nominate a teacher, please click [here](#).

For curriculum directors, administrators and teachers

Register now for Health Education Workshop

The Ohio Department of Education, Ohio Department of Health and Buckeye Healthy Schools Alliance are sponsoring a two-day health education workshop for middle and high school health teachers. This Workshop, held at the Hamilton County Public Health Department in Cincinnati, is set up as two interactive training sessions designed to teach educators to develop curriculum, teaching units and lesson plans that focus on building the critical thinking and decision making skills students need to establish good health behaviors. Facilitators for the workshop are Dr. Susan Telljohann and Dr. Joseph Dake of the University of Toledo. Participants will meet Feb. 24 to learn how to incorporate characteristics of effective health programs into their health curriculum/units/lesson plans then go back to their classrooms to implement and test these strategies. Participants will then come back together on March 30 to discuss lessons learned and work through challenges in their classrooms.

The cost to attend this workshop is \$20 which includes lunch for both days and all workshop materials. Space is limited and registration is required. Click [here](#) to register. The registration deadline is Feb.15. Please note that participants must attend both sessions. For questions, please contact Dawn Ayres, Office of Family and Community Support, at Dawn.Ayres@ode.state.oh.us or (614) 466-9271.

Teaching in Taiwan opportunity open to elementary and middle school teachers

Through a memorandum of understanding with Taiwan's Ministry of Education, Ohio teachers have the opportunity to spend a year living and teaching English in Taiwan. The Ohio Department of Education invites new and experienced elementary and middle school teachers to apply to participate in the

Teaching in Taiwan program for the 2012-2013 school year. The deadline for applying is Friday, April 6, 2012. More information is available [here](#), or by contacting Dwight Groce at dwight.groce@ode.state.oh.us.

Physical education evaluation training workshops scheduled for January and February

The Ohio Department of Education (ODE) has developed a physical education evaluation instrument to help teachers determine if the benchmarks required by law are being met. Senate Bill 210 identifies four components that will make up a measure which will be posted on the local and state report card. Those components are benchmark evaluation, BMI, physical activity and compliance with local wellness policy.

One part of the law will measure student success in meeting the benchmarks contained in the Physical Education Academic Content Standards. To help educators learn more about the physical education evaluation, ODE will hold the following free workshops:

- Friday, Jan. 20 – Wright State University, Nutter Center;
- Friday, Feb. 3 – Miami County ESC;
- Tuesday, Feb. 14 – Northwest Ohio ESC;
- Wednesday, Feb. 15 – Muskingum Valley ESC;
- Thursday, Feb. 16 – Hancock County Agricultural Service Center;
- Friday, Feb. 17 – Butler County ESC.

Space is limited and pre-registration is required. Individuals must register through [STARS](#) by using the SAFE sign-in. Additional workshops will be offered throughout the spring. For more information, see the calendar link on the ODE home page or contact Lisa Lyle Henry at lisa.henry@ode.state.oh.us.

Healthy School Leadership Institute grant opportunity announced

ODE, in partnership with the Ohio Department of Health, has posted a Request for Application for the Healthy School Leadership Institute. The two-year Institute is designed to:

- Build districts' capacity for data-based decision making and planning for sustainable changes that will improve learning and health outcomes;
- Integrate strategies that meet students' physical, social and emotional needs into the school improvement plan; and
- Establish benchmarks that can document progress toward improved health and academic outcomes.

The application will be posted this week [here](#).

Save the Date for the Coordinated School Health Conference

The 2012 Coordinated School Health Conference is scheduled for June 25-27, 2012. The conference theme, agenda and location are forthcoming.

Good news for everyone

Brunswick student wins 2011 Wendy's High School Heisman

Congratulations are in order for Selena Pasadyn, who was named the female winner of the 2011 Wendy's High School Heisman last month in New York City. Selena, a senior at Brunswick High School, was one of 48,000 applicants for the award and is the youngest recipient in the 18-year history of the award.

The award judges students on both their academic and athletic achievements, as well as their community service. The 16-year-old holds the school record for Ohio's Division 1 cross country state meet and is a four-year member of the varsity swim team. In addition, she carries a 4.7 grade point average and earned perfect ACT and SAT scores in mathematics. After high school, she is considering a career in medicine and plans to run cross country, as well as track and field, in college.

Her community involvement includes volunteering at Medina General Hospital, where her father is a

registered nurse. She is an altar server at Our Lady of Grace Church in Hinckley and teaches vacation Bible school.

Because of her selection, Wendy's is donating \$10,000 to Brunswick High School, in addition to the \$2,000 it donated when she was named a finalist for the award.

ODE is interested in your thoughts about how EdConnection fulfills your information needs. Please send any comments or suggestions to superintendent@ode.state.oh.us.

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